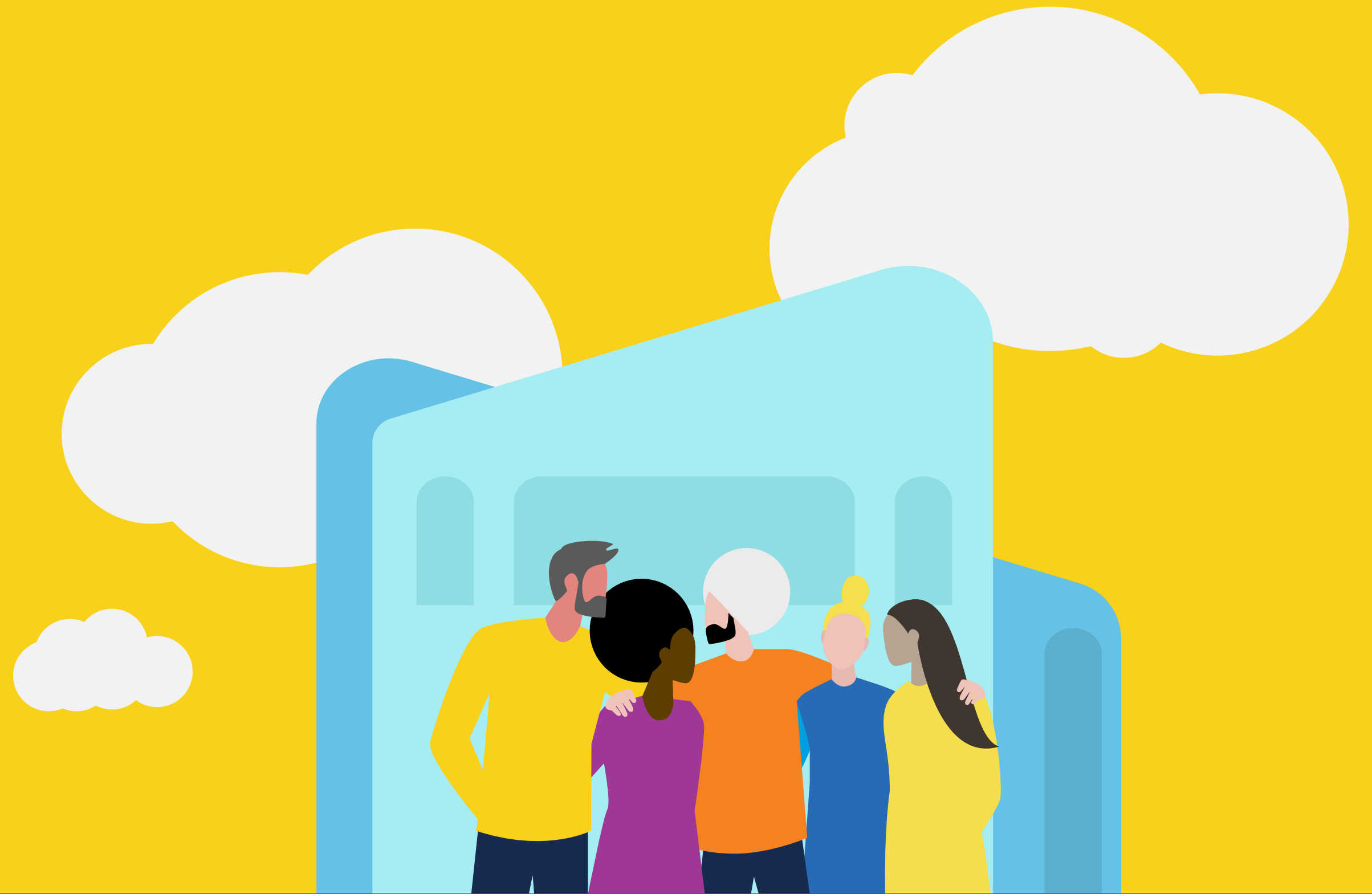


# Workplace Communities

## **Explained**



“Alone we can do so little.  
Together we can do  
so much.”

Hellen Keller

**Communities bring us together and give us a sense of belonging.**

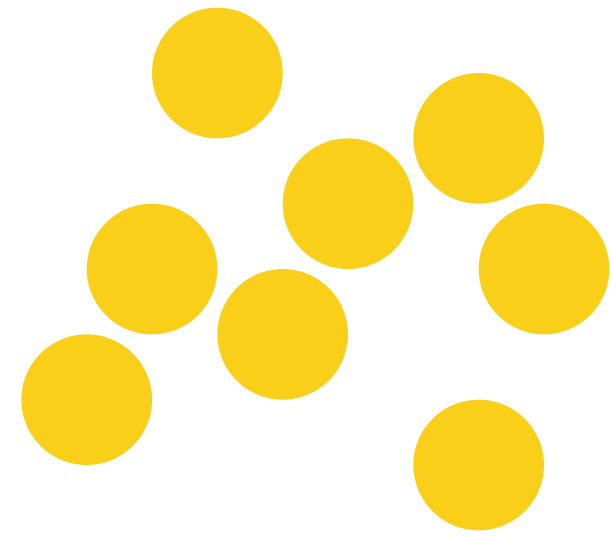


Communities also multiply our potential impact.

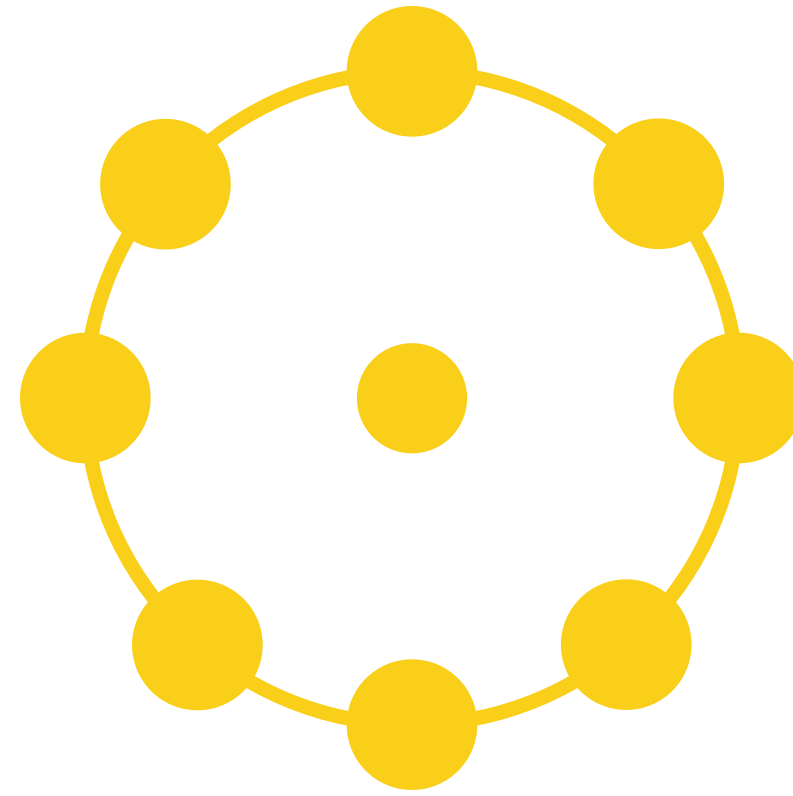
With more minds and hands working together, **our communities empower us** to accomplish more than we ever could on our own. Together, we can achieve things like mobilizing in response to crises, creating space for critical dialogue, collaborating on solutions to specific problems, and convening members from around the world to celebrate a shared passion.



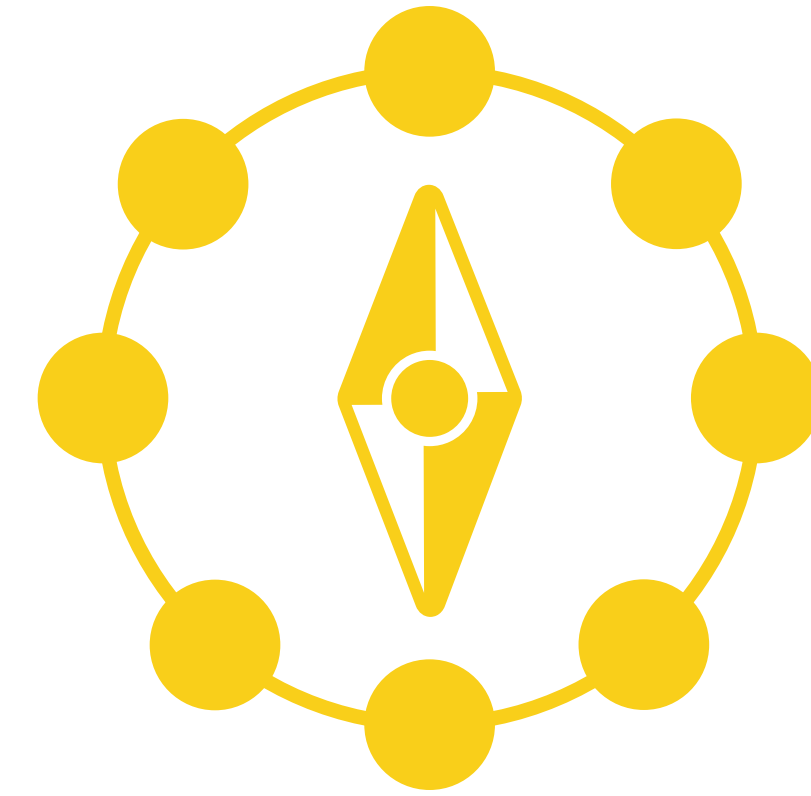
# Community: Defined



**A group of  
motivated  
people**



**organized around  
a common interest**



**moving in a  
strategic direction**

# A hero-level community

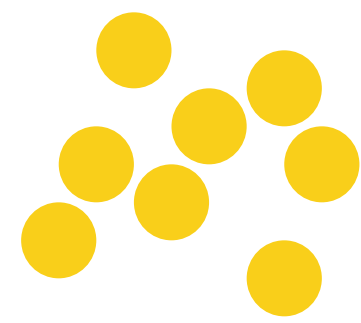
## Comic Con

There are millions of comic lovers worldwide who always lust after the latest stories and new releases. But just loving comics doesn't necessarily make you part of a community.

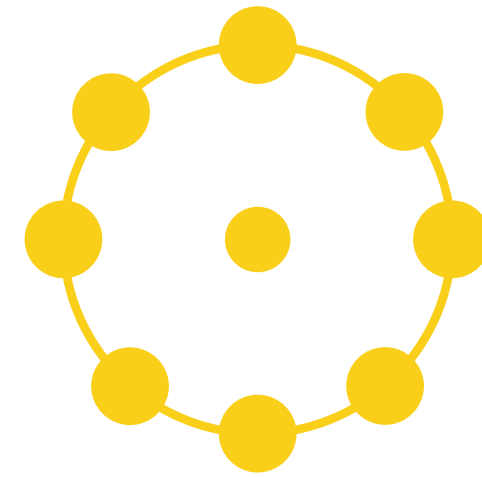
ComicCon is an example of a dynamic community of comic fans who come together to celebrate their shared passion for comics while advancing a strategic goal: to promote that same passion in the general public.

With events that convene more than 130,000 participants, the ComicCon community has incredible levels of engagement. Tickets sell out within hours to community members eager to meet and support creators, learn about the comic art form from experts in the field, and celebrate with other like-minded fans.

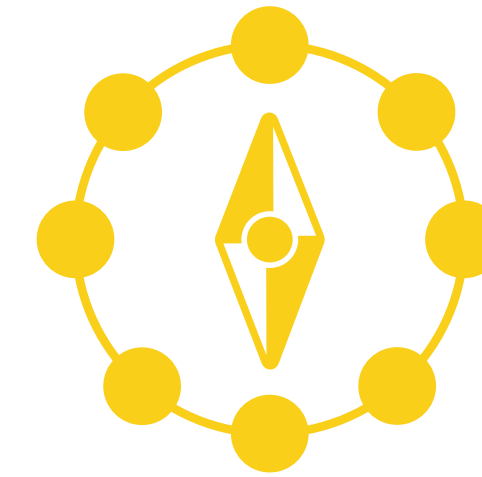
People fly from around the world and dress up as their favorite characters to participate in community experiences they can't get anywhere else.



**Comic fans**



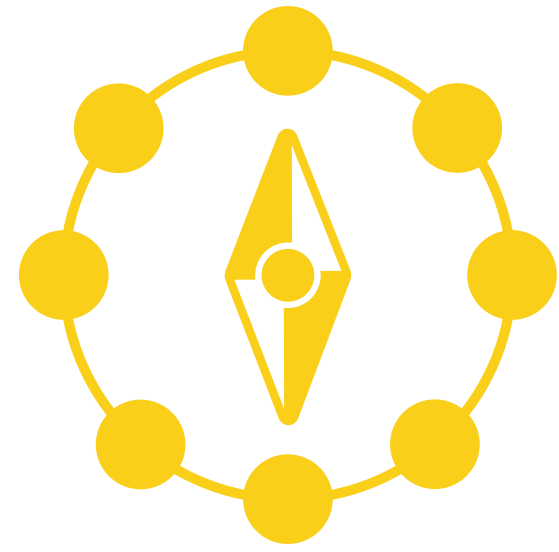
**Learning about  
and celebrating  
comics**



**Enhancing the  
general public's  
awareness of and  
appreciation for  
comics**



# Communities come in all sizes:



**Community**

**A group of motivated people**

**Organized around a common interest**

**Moving in a strategic direction**



**The Climate Reality Project**

Environmentalists

Combating the climate crisis

Taking action to win climate & justice battles with local, national and global stakeholders



**Girl Scouts**

Girls in grades K-12

Try new things, develop a range of skills, take on leadership roles, & just be themselves,

Building girls of courage, confidence, & character, who make the world a better place



**Cultivators**

Corporate changemakers

Advancing new ideas inside their organizations

Creating more inclusive, empowered organizations where new ideas can thrive

# Communities are a big part of our day-to-day lived experiences.

Think about your neighborhood, your school community, or your favorite hobbies. As technology platforms become more accessible, communities take on an even bigger role.

However, there is one space with tremendous opportunity for more robust community building: **inside our workplaces.\***

*\*The places where most of us spend nearly 50% of our waking hours!*

With the ongoing digitization of work, rise in remote work, and isolation at work (40% in a recent study), large companies see more value in creating thriving workplace communities to find shared belonging around a common interest and direction.

The default community of “who your cubicle is next to” is being replaced by a dynamic, digital community of “whoever you’d most like to connect with.”



# Workplace communities take many forms,

including **employee resource groups**, **communities of practice**, **learning communities**, and other **semi-formal communities** organized around a specific project or initiative.

But it doesn't really matter what they're called. When done right, the power these communities share is an ability to connect employees who may otherwise feel lonely, isolated, or disengaged and expand each others' skills & positive impact on the organization.

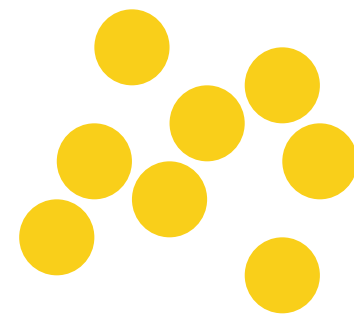


# Stronger together

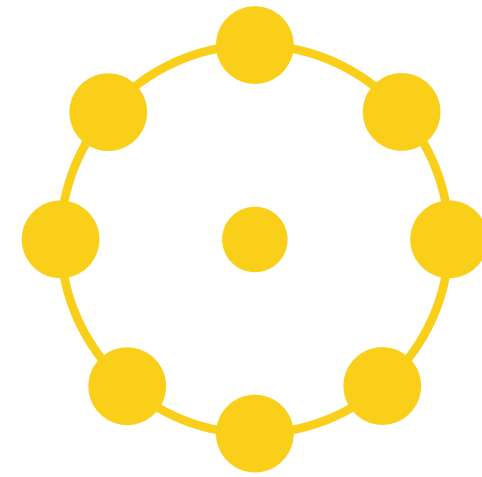
## TEDxAlconR&D

Sometimes bringing people together around an established brand and format can be a very powerful way to convene community. This has been the case since 2017 at Alcon, where leaders have built off the TEDx format of programming by organizing events around the world at Alcon offices that allow for Alcon employees to share their ideas authentically.

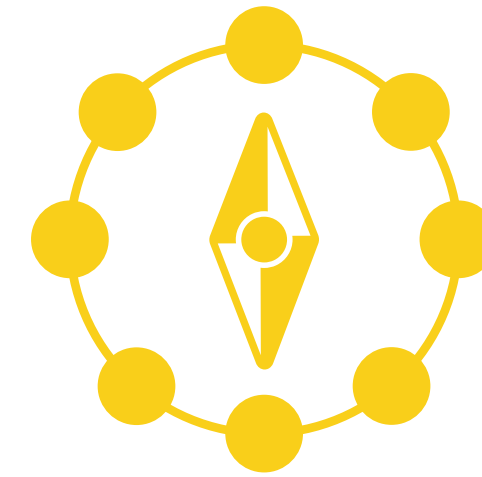
TEDxAlconR&D gives employees who are passionate about advancing ideas in the organization a reason to convene. At Alcon, the chance to give a TEDx talk, challenge others in the organization to act, and build skills as influential communicators is a powerful motivator. The success of TEDxAlconR&D increases the visibility of the company's R&D community, democratizes access to org. leaders, and continues to enhance collaboration between colleagues.



**R&D employees  
who want to be  
exposed to new  
ideas**



**Opening  
their minds  
and learning  
from their  
colleagues**



**Advancing new  
ideas to challenge  
the status quo at  
Alcon**



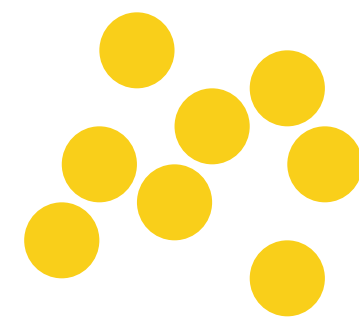
# Community of belonging

## Github Blacktocats

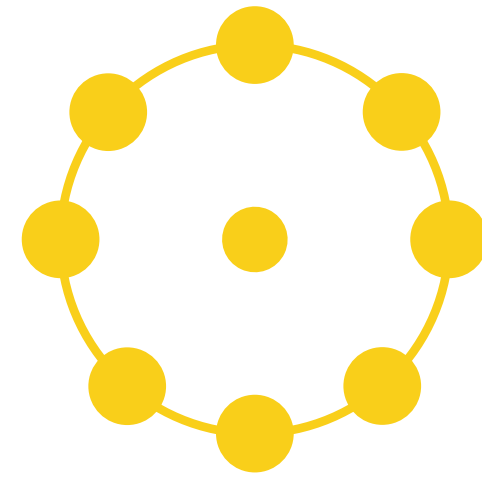
GitHub has “Communities of Belonging” in place of what many organizations call “Employee Resource Groups.” As part of GitHub’s commitment to supporting their talent, they support numerous CoB’s.

The original CoB was Blacktocats, which focuses on recruitment and community-building, career development and retention, and open source and education.

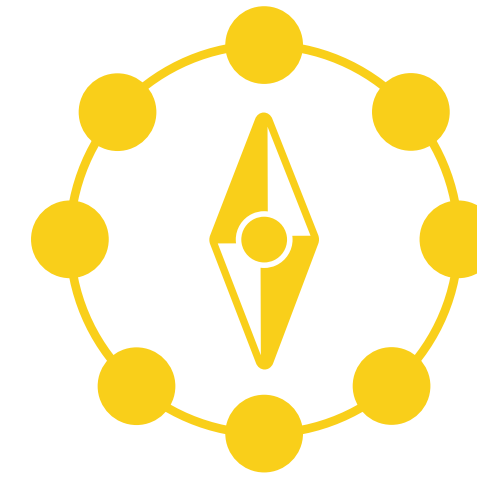
While their work includes recruiting and advancing Black talent, some of their most notable initiatives include the work they do outside of GitHub. For example, in 2019, they hosted a [hackathon](#) in Lagos, Nigeria. These types of engagements connect GitHub employees to a greater purpose.



**Black employees and allies at Github**



**Promote Blacktocat leadership and development at all levels within Github**



**Attract and empower Black lives in tech**



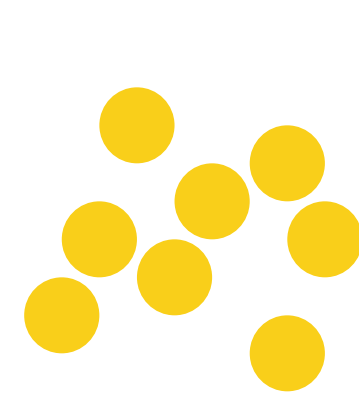
# The secret to success

## Intuit D4D Catalysts

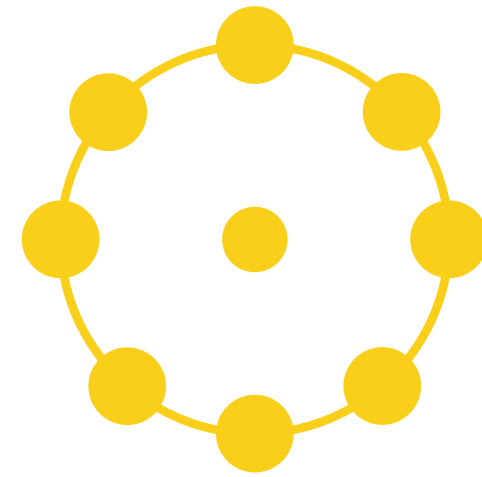
At Intuit, design is at the center of all of their decisions. But as the company grew, it became evident that philosophy needed a community of stewards to help make sure it was brought to life in practice on a day-to-day basis. Enter: D4D Catalysts -- a community of certified practitioners in Intuit's "secret sauce" design philosophy.

"D4D is our #1 secret weapon at Intuit. There is no #2." – Scott Cook, co-Founder, Intuit Inc.

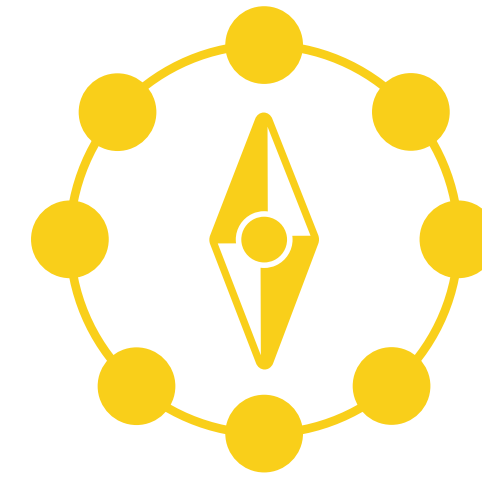
This community of practice includes a cross-functional group of associates who apply annually to spend a portion of their time facilitating sessions, upskilling colleagues, and ensuring that Intuit's design practices remain at the core of everything they do.



**Intuit employees  
passionate about  
design**



**Utilizing Intuit's D4D  
methodology for  
important projects at  
the company**



**Upskilling  
the whole  
organization to  
deploy their secret  
weapon**



Every organization has big goals: competing for the best talent, achieving the highest levels of employee engagement, or being adaptable enough to meet the endless demand for innovation, continuous learning, and overall agility.

But the most influential organizations know that

workplace communities aren't just "nice to have" anymore; they're crucial for achieving any of those goals.



# Value of workplace communities

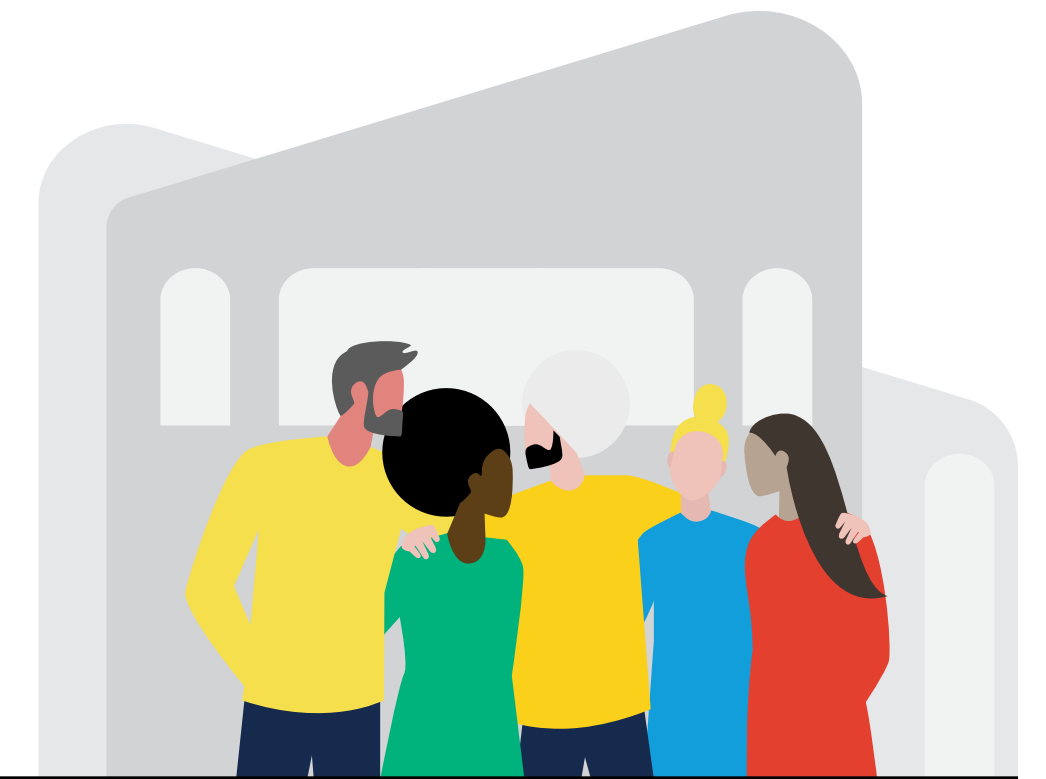
## Value to Members

Higher levels of fulfillment and engagement due to meaningful community goals and visible impact.

Opportunities for professional development, leadership, and collaboration.

Increased knowledge gained through contact between employees from different siloes and levels.

A sense of belonging.



## Value to the Organization

Community goals can result in new product development, positive culture change, and/or operational improvements.

Professional development and leadership opportunities improve employee performance and talent retention.

Cross-functional knowledge-sharing increases innovation potential and organizational performance.

Employees' sense of belonging improves organizational commitment and morale.



# But to realize this value,

community can't be built in name only. At your company, you may have seen the word "community" applied to anything from a monthly newsletter, to a technology platform, to a depressing series of meetings organized by senior leaders in a misguided effort to drive engagement from the top down.

So, let's be clear:

**A distribution list is not a community.**

**A monthly series of meetings is not a community.**

**A new internal social platform is not a community.**

If that's all you have, then you're probably more familiar with "communities" that feel like this:

"It didn't feel like a community as much as a series of events that tended to attract the same crowd over and over again." (Bacon, J.)

"I think the community itself needs less direct involvement and control from upper management...because it should be something that the employees are running themselves. They are closer to the issues." (Beaver, G.)

If you want an internal community in your organization that's more like the communities making an impact in the world outside of work -- a community made up of intrinsically motivated people who support each other, connect with each other, and work together to achieve common goals -- **we have good news:**

You absolutely can create a thriving workplace community inside your organization.





# Keys to building a better workplace community:

## **Be Supportive**

Support people to self-select organically vs. forcing top-down membership

## **Be Curious**

Experiment with different types of spaces and experiences to bring people together

## **Find Your People**

Focus on finding people with similar motivations vs. convincing people who don't have the same motivation

## **Think Bigger**

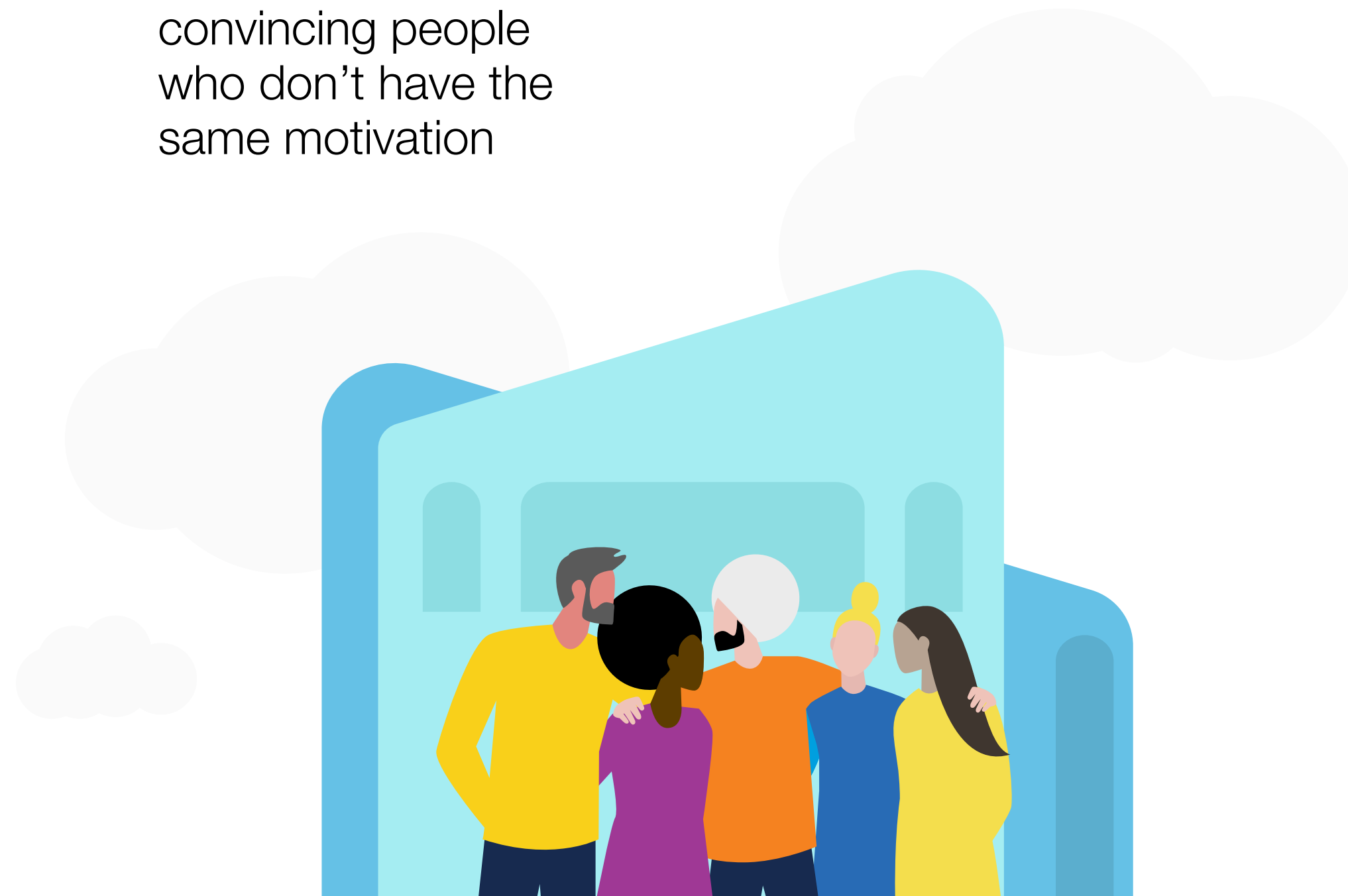
Paint the picture of an aspirational future state

## **Purpose is Power**

Craft a purpose as a rallying cry that others are excited about

## **Cultivate Success**

Measure engagement and actively walk people up the engagement ladder



# Let's recap:

Communities aren't just groups of people standing near each other, and they definitely aren't mailing lists. They are groups of motivated people, organized around a shared interest and moving in a strategic direction.

Communities are pretty great. They benefit us as individuals, add value to our organizations, and exponentially increase our potential impact on the world.

Successful workplace communities, like TEDxAlconR&D, GitHub Blacktocats, and Intuit D4D Catalysts, create an incredible sense of belonging in the workplace that has benefits for both employees and the organization.

Therefore, **you absolutely can create** a thriving workplace community inside your organization.



Are you leading a diversity group (ERG), a learning group, or some other kind of community of practice in your workplace? Do you want to start a new workplace community that is engaging and achieves real outcomes?

You're in the right place.

Our **Community Accelerator** helps you create, engage, and manage your community with intention, while connecting with other workplace community-builders.

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”

Margaret Mead